

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A process of treating a metallic bone implant having no calcium-phosphate-containing coating, consisting essentially of treating the metallic bone implant with an aqueous solution containing fluoride ions in a concentration of greater than 0% and up to 3%,

said aqueous solution being free from sodium and sodium ions, and being a solution of a fluoride selected from the group consisting of lithium fluoride, cesium fluoride, potassium fluoride, ammonium fluoride, stannous fluoride, or any combination thereof[[,]]

~~in which the surface of the metallic bone implant after the treatment with the aqueous solution containing fluoride ions has essentially the same morphology as the surface of the implant before said treatment.~~

24-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) A process of treating a metallic bone implant, said metallic bone implant having no calcium-phosphate-containing coating and having a surface layer constituted by a metallic oxide, consisting essentially of treating the metallic bone implant with an aqueous solution containing fluoride ions in a concentration of greater than 0% and up to 3%,

said aqueous solution being free from sodium and sodium ions, and being a solution of a fluoride selected from the group consisting of lithium fluoride, cesium fluoride, potassium fluoride, ammonium fluoride, stannous fluoride, or any combination thereof.

28-33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 27, wherein said metallic bone implant is constituted by titanium or a titanium alloy, and said metallic oxide is a titanium oxide.

35-43. (Cancelled)

44. (Currently Amended) A process of treating a metallic bone implant, consisting essentially of treating the metallic bone implant with an aqueous solution containing fluoride ions in a concentration of greater than 0% and up to 3%, said aqueous solution being free from sodium and sodium ions,

said aqueous solution being free from sodium and sodium ions, and being a solution of a fluoride selected from the group consisting of lithium fluoride, cesium fluoride, potassium fluoride, ammonium fluoride, stannous fluoride, or any combination thereof; and

comprising a further step, performed after said treatment with the aqueous solution containing fluoride ions, of treating wherein the implant ~~is treated~~ with a solution comprising calcium ions.

45-82. (Cancelled)

83. (New) A process as claimed in claim 44 wherein treating with the solution comprising calcium ions, comprises:

precipitating the calcium ions from the solution comprising calcium ions.

84. (New) A process as claimed in claim 44 wherein the metallic bone implant has no calcium-phosphate-containing coating.